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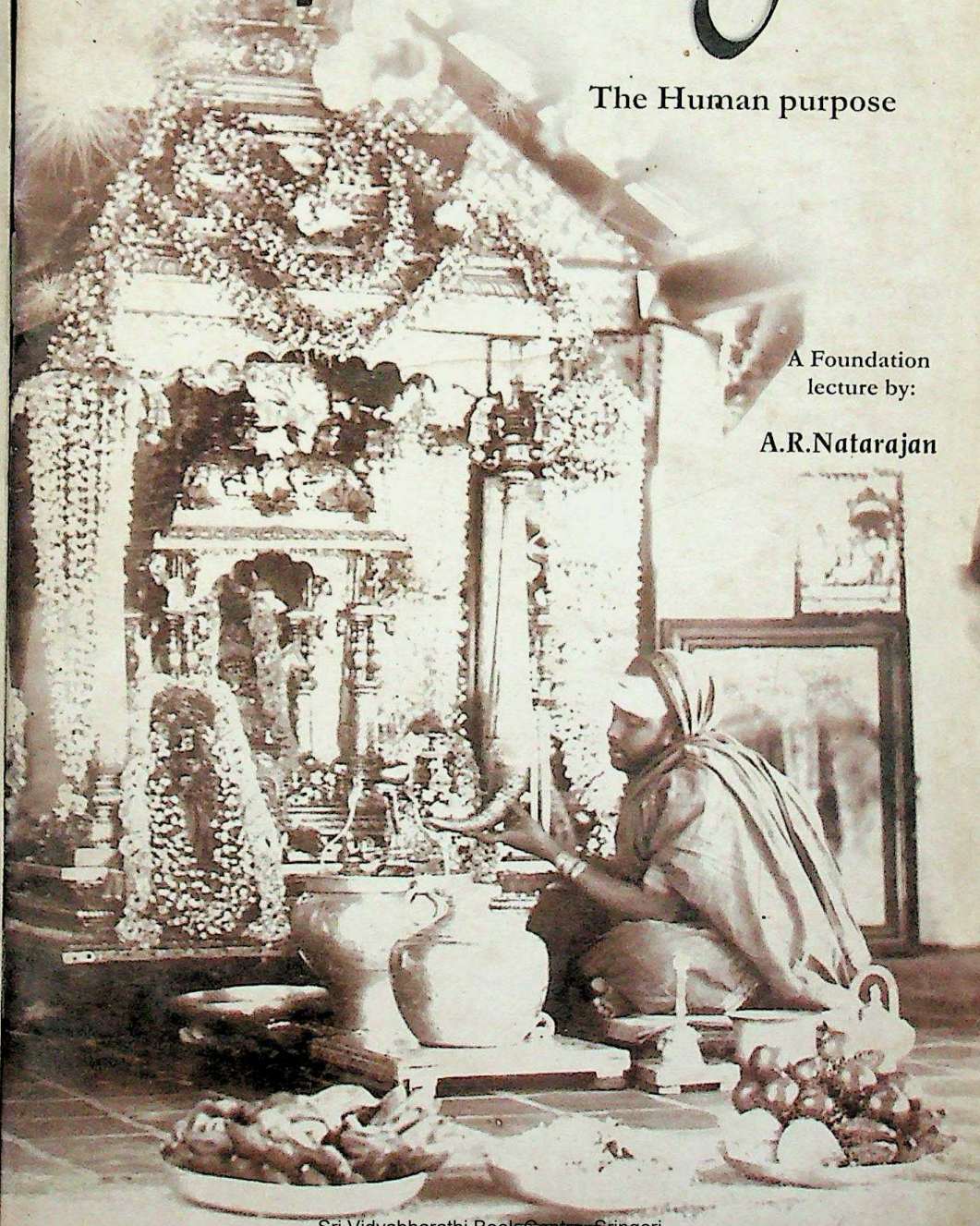
Self-knowledge

The Human purpose



A Foundation lecture by:

A.R.Natarajan

Sri Vidyabharathi Book Centre, Sringeri

H.H.Chandrashekara Bharati Mahaswamin

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FOUNDATION LECTURE

ON

H.H CHANDRASEKHARA

BHARATI MAHASWAMIN

AT SHANKARA VIDYA KENDRA, NEW DELHI

ON

17TH OCTOBER 2006

By:
A.R.Natarajan

Sri Vidyabharathi Book Centre, Sringeri

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The first Foundation Lecture was delivered by His Holiness Bharati Tirta Mahaswamin at Sringeri, and I was present to hear his inspired talk. He has now given me the blessing of delivering this year's Foundation Lecture on His Holiness Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswamin.

I also wish to thank Sri V.R. Gowri Shankar, the dedicated, Administrator, Sri Sringeri Sarada Peeta, Sringeri.

Sri S. Lakshminarayanan, Secretary, Shankara Vidya Kendra, Sri N.R. Ramachandran, Manager, and their assistant Sri Prashant Rao were all very supportive.

A.R. Natarajan

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I offer my prostrations to a guruparampara, a continuous link without a break in time of relationship between the guru and his disciple, a one to one relationship, which is a must, a necessary precondition for Self-knowledge. The guru alone can make the disciple aware of the truth of the Vedantic scriptures.

Dakshinamurthy Samarambam !

Shankaracharya Madhyamam !!

Asmad Acharya Paryantam !

Vande Guru Paramparam !!

Guru Vandana to His Holiness Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswamigal

My guru was a knower of Brahman Yet he lived in the world for its welfare. Remembering the events in the life of such a one, chanting his name, and trying to follow his example, at least to some extent, would lead to the highest good.

I prostrate daily with devotion to the pre-eminent Guru's feet, which are merciful to devotees and an infinitesimal exposure to whose luster always destroys the entire darkness of the mind.

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-- Abhinava Vidya Tirtha Mahaswamin

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He was indeed an exalted one who incarnated in Sringeri itself one hundred years ago, well adorned with divine virtues and occupying the Dakshinmnaya Sringagiri Sarada Peetha. He blessed thousands of people and was resplendent as a Jivanmukta. He acquired unparalleled erudition in scriptures (sastras) making even those of ordinary intellect comprehend even the profound import of the scriptures. The touchstone bearing testimony to his erudition is the Vivekachoodamani-vyakhya authored by him.

-- H.H. Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamin

Introduction

As I am beginning this Foundation Lecture, I am overwhelmed by the recollection of the grace of His Holiness Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswamin, who entered my life through a picture of his, at Sringeri Mutt's Choultry, at Sringeri. This was in 1956. I had the opportunity of offering at His feet, as a Birth Centenary Offering, "Jagadguru Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswamin Mystic & Seer", A few years ago again in 2004, another offering, "His Holiness Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswamin A Pictorial Biography & Teachings" was published. Mysterious are the ways of "Leela Purushas".

I pray to him so that the words may flow by His grace and that I may not interpose myself in its free flow.

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It is necessary to know the essential biographical details of His Holiness Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswamin's life, for the guru and his teachings are integral. He was the living embodied of the truth which he expounded in many ways to the devotees and disciples.

The glory of Sringeri The birth of Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswamin

Sringeri is the Gods land on earth. The peaceful flow of Tunga river amidst hills and valleys draws the mind naturally to the contemplation of the divine. It is extolled in Valmiki Ramayana as the auspicious place where Vibhandaka Muni stayed and the place is named after his son Rishya Shrunga. The glory of Sringeri was heightened by the fact that Adi Sankara Bhagavatpada chose this serene setting as his residence for twelve years in his short sojourn on earth. During this period he expounded the meaning of the scriptures to his disciples. He regarded the place as an ideal one for installing the idol of Saradambal, Goddess of wisdom; fountainhead of 'Paravidya' or supreme knowledge.

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In the nineteenth century, the thirty first and thirty second pontiffs of Sringeri Sarada Peeta were also born in Sringeri, heralding a new era of Sringeri's glory. Glorious as Sringeri is in recent times its glory has been enhanced by the birth of His Holiness Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswamin in Sringeri, on 16th October 1892.

Born to adorn the Sringeri Sarada Peeta

His Holiness Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswamin was the thirteenth child of his parents Gopala Sastri and Lakshmamma. All the earlier children had died prematurely. Understandably they were eager for a son who could bring the family prestige and continue the family lineage. Inspite of the arduous nature of the long distance travel in those days, they felt it would be most appropriate to pray to Lord Mahabaleswara in Gokarna and proceed on this to pilgrimage with the blessings of His Holiness Sacchidananda Siva Abhinava Narasimha Bharati Mahaswamin. The Swami could foresee the birth of his successor to this pious couple. Hence while encouraging their idea of going on a pilgrimage to Gokarna for this specific purpose, he advised them that in their best interest they should dedicate their son to the Peeta. The swami had taken over the responsibility of the spiritual welfare of his successor. The couple were overjoyed when a few months later a son was born. He was named Narasimha after the family deity and the guru. After he had completed the lower secondary examination in the local Anglo Vernacular School, run by the Government. His Holiness Narasimha Bharati Mahaswamin shifted him to Sadvidya Sanjeevini Patashala, which is being run by the Peeta. This enabled

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guru to take over the supervision of his education and monitor his progress. The guru was extremely happy to notice Narasimha's sparkling intelligence, his auspicious qualities and his exceptional devotion to Saradambal. He encouraged him in every possible way. When he was about to complete the studies, His Holiness decided that Narasimha should go to Bangalore for further Vedic studies at the new Patashala started by him there under the name, "Bharatiya Geervana Prouda Vidya Vardhini Shala". Before he left for Bangalore, the Swami initiated Narasimha into sannyasa at the Kalabhairava temple. There Sri Narasimha Bharati Mahaswamin composed a verse which was a direct message to Narasimha. It read as follows:

"Oh child! If you have desire to cross the ocean of transmigratory existence then.. take up sannyasa..... enquire long about truth by recourse to the nectarine utterances of Upanishads flowing from the lotus mouth of the Sadguru".

This is one of the recognized modes of 'Manasa Deeksha' or initiation by mind.

In the following year, in the early months of 1912, after his return from Kaladi, His Holiness Narasimha Bharati Mahaswamin's health deteriorated rapidly and he nominated Narasimha as his successor. However, by the time, he could reach Sringeri, Swami had attained Mahasamadhi. It was a great blow to Narasimha who had looked forward for many years of training under the direct guidance of his guru.

It was decided that the most suitable date for Narasimha to ascend the Peeta was 7th April 1912. The previous night, his guru appeared in a dream and

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blessed him with the sacred words, "Aham Brahmasmi" (I am Brahman). Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswamin adorned the Sringeri Sarada Peeta from April 1912 to September 1954 as the Peeta's thirty fifth guru, with a luster, which is difficult to emulate.

The benedictory address of His Holiness on the occasion of his coronation is an inspired one. Some extracts from the same is given below:

"It is your great devotion to the guru, and the Peeta which has brought you here in your thousands traveling long distances to reach remote Sringeri. From Rameswaram to the Himalayas you have all assembled here. Is this not sufficient evidence of your awareness of the greatness of this Sarada peeta and Sankara Bhagavadpadal.

Practise devotion towards the guru, develop your faith in this Peeta, eschew adharmic activities and be desirous of involving yourself in virtuous deeds. Just as all of you have assembled here in thousands from distant parts of our country on a single mission, all of us must jointly pursue the ways and means of protecting our Sanatana, eternal dharma.

Cherish your Gurubhakti. Resolve that you will place your utmost faith in this Peeta and to protect our dharma. Hoist the flag of dharma and hold it high.

Meditate on Saradambal whom we see here or the Saradambal of the remote Kashmir. Indeed, both are the same only. Enhance the glory of this Peeta adorned by Goddess Sarada, who is worthy of worship by the three worlds".

Between 1912 and 1916 His Holiness worked single mindedly to construct a temple over the Samadhi of his guru and to consecrate a temple of Sarada.

In 1911 the wooden structure round the Sarada temple got burnt accidentally. Narasimha Bharati Mahaswamin had planned to construct a

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granite temple in its place. Hardly had the work started when he suddenly attained Mahasamadhi. Hence it was left to the Jagadguru to complete this task. His zeal, intense devotion, and youthful vigour (he was 20 years old at that time) made it possible for him to achieve these two cherished goals of his. Both the Samadhi temple and the new Sarada temple constructed in granite were completed and consecrated on the same day. It was Thursday, Vaishaka Krishna Panchami of the year Nala in 1916.

Extracts from the speech of His Holiness on that occasion is given below:-

"All of you are aware that our guru Sri Adi Sankara, out of his extreme compassion for us, installed divine mother Sri Saradambal here at Sringeri. Indeed, we are fortunate to have darsan of Sri Saradambal whom, great Acharyas in the chain that started from Sri Adi Sankara, such as Sri Sureshwara and Sri Vidyaranya have worshipped with limitless devotion. Devotees! the deity we behold is no ordinary God. She is the Supreme Goddess of all other Gods. Our preceptors have attained unbounded glory by their devout worship of Sri Saradambal.

The Chandramouleeswara linga and the Rathna Garbha Ganapathy idol which are in the math, were being worshipped by Sri Govinda Bhagavathpada, who gave them to Sri Sankara. Thereafter, they are being worshipped by the successive pontiffs of this Peeta. This is evident from the Chitvilaseeya Sankara Vijayam.

While worshipping the deities Sri Saradambal, Sri Rathna Garbha Ganapathy and Sri Chandramouleeswara, our preceptors had in mind the welfare of the entire humanity. Their daily poojas contained a sankalpam for the welfare of our people. Goddess Saradambal, who is the embodiment of the supreme knowledge, fulfils the wishes of her devotees who come to have her darsan. Sri Sankara installed her here for he knew that she would ferry her devotees across the ocean of samsara.

One must be fortunate to be born as a human being in this country. To get

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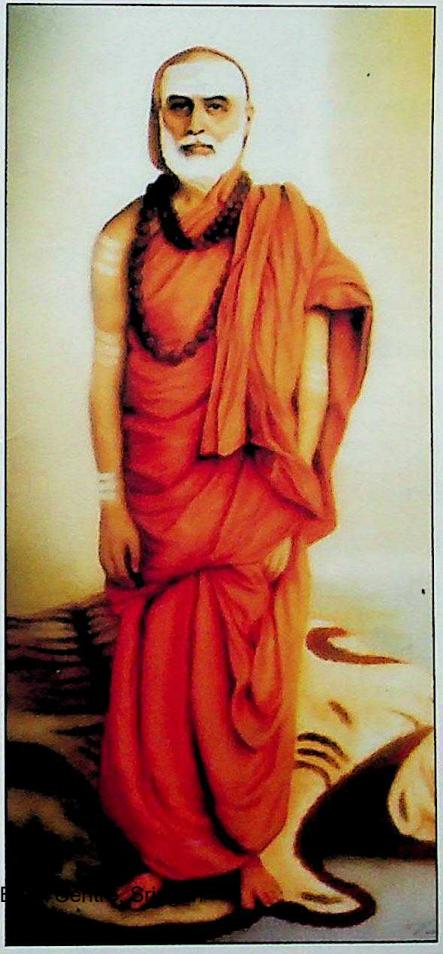
Sri Sankara and one's preceptor is the next virtue. Added to these two, if a person were to have Sri Sarada as his 'Upasana Devata', he is the most fortunate person. Luckily, we have all these three merits. Indeed, this status has come to us on account of past virtues.

His Digvijaya was in the years 1924-1927 and covered his guru's birth place, Mysore, Kaladi and most of the places in Tamil Nadu. His talks in Tamil Nadu are clear and incisive and it is the principal source material for this Foundation Lecture on 'The Self-Knowledge The Human Purpose'. It has been explained with such great clarity, directness and simplicity by His Holiness Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswamin, in his Talks during the Digivijayam.



During the year between 1928 and 1931, His Holiness chose to abide in the solitary grandeur of Brahmic state. From then onwards, he would periodically go into that state called Antharmukha and whenever he came out of it he would be freely amicable to seekers and devotees. His Holiness selected Srinivasa of Bangalore as his successor for he found him to be an ideal for it. This holy function was on 22nd of May 1931. His **Vijaya Yatra** from 1938 1940 covered Bangalore, Nanjangud and Kaladi. His

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Nakshatra Mahotsava was celebrated befittingly at Bangalore and he spent Chaturmasya at Kaladi.

While at Kaladi, His Holiness wrote a commentary on Adi Sankara Bhagavadpada's "Vivekachoodamani", 'The Crest Jewel of Discrimination'. His commentary covers five hundred and eighty one verses and the first one, which has been attempt through the centuries. It is a classic by itself.

On his return to Sringeri, he resumed his classes on Vedanta and wrote some thought-provoking articles in a journal published by the Peeta.

The devotees found an excellent opportunity for pouring out their feelings in 1952 on the occasion of Mahaswamin's 60th Birth Year. On 14th of July 1954, Mahaswamin performed 'Vyasapooja' and observed 'Chaturmasya'. In August, the President of India, Dr. Rajendra Prasad visited Sringeri to pay his homage to the Jagadguru, having heard that the Mahaswamin fully fitted the description of a 'Sthitapragna', a person of steady wisdom, described in the 'Bhagavad Gita'. They discussed about 'Dharma' and allied subjects.

These appearances were deceptive for it appears that Mahaswamin had strongly felt that the role assigned to him by his guru had been fulfilled and also because he had the fullest confidence in his disciple, Abhinava Vidya Tirta Mahaswamin. He dropped his body without any hesitation on Sunday, the 26th of September, 'Mahalaya Amavasya' day, in the Tunga river. The previous night he had done 'Pradakshina' of his guru's Samadhi several times and was heard to be chanting loudly, verses from 'Atma Vidya Vilasam'. Early in the morning at 4.00 a.m. he went to the river for bath, overruling the objections of his attendant that it was chill. His attendant cautioned him not to go far. It appears that before the attendant could notice, the Mahaswamin had taken a few steps. Assuming the 'Padmasana' posture he went deeper into the river. In a couple of minutes the attendant was shocked to see the body floating in the Tunga river. Abhinava Vidya Tirta Mahaswamin, the successor, rushed to the spot, maintaining his calm, inspite of deep sorrow, tried all possible means to ensure his recovery.

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But it was of no avail. The fingers of Mahaswamin's hand had assumed 'Chinmudra', famous insignia of Adi guru, Dakshinamurthy. His face was shining with dazzling brilliance.

THE SELF-KNOWLEDGE

The Human Purpose

The Human purpose

The only purpose of human birth is to be free of the illusive idea resulting from the identification of the Self with the body and the consequent delusive idea that one is the body bound in time and space. Human beings alone have the intelligence to discriminate and the freedom to act according to the guidance given by the scriptures, the proper understanding of which is possible only through guru's guidance. Intelligence marks the difference between a human being and rest of creation. Therefore there is a duty cast on them only. "Pilgrimages, bathing in sacred rivers and the like are only for human beings. Does a tiger have to take a bath in the sea at Rameswaram for preying on other animals?". It is only after many births in various wombs that one is ultimately able to attain human birth. "The question therefore arises as to what we have achieved by being born as human beings? We are witnessing at present times what could be termed a life in which money is the fulfillment. We have heard the words of realized jnani's pouring forth the wisdom of their experience. Even so, it appears we have not found any direction of our lives. We do not seem to have imbibed any of these values. Instead we are attracted

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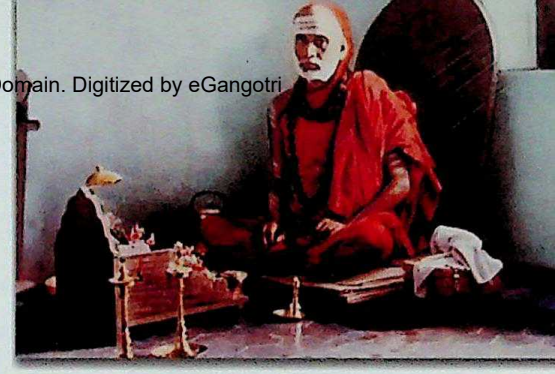

by money and keep wandering in all directions...". "Often we seem to be like Duryodhana, who remained unfazed and unchanged even after hearing the words of the Lord".

The Urgent Need

Therefore the urgent need is not to lead our lives on the lines of our tendencies. If after being born as human beings, we fail to attain jnana, we might as well been born as animals. "Who can be a bigger fool than the one who has squandered the advantage of being born as a human being?" If any one claims that he can control the chaotic mind without being really able to do so, he would be like a man "who offers 'ahuti' with ashes to the sacramental fire". What indeed is the use of his God given powers of intellect and discrimination if he is again lapses into a life based on sensate enjoyment.

His Holiness repeatedly draws one's attention to the need for not squandering the human birth, by ignoring its very purpose, which is to attain Self-Knowledge. Bhartruhari asks, 'For baking cattle fodder, is a vessel made of diamond necessary? To till land do we need a golden plough?' The way one mutilates the very purpose of life would be no better. In his inimitable style the Swami adds, "Even if we loose a couple of rupees we are downcast for three days. Would not the drifting a life away be a tragedy of the highest order?"

The Duty

Therefore one might say that as an automatic consequence, one has a duty to follow the scriptural injunctions in order to be able to practice correctly the means necessary for an inward bound life. The scriptures lay down clearly

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the norms in two ways. Actions which are conducive to permanent happiness and actions, which are detrimental to the same. One has to avoid the latter and perform the former. One may ask, where is the need to refer to the scriptures when one can himself understand and pay the necessary attention to the right course of conduct. The necessity arises because scriptures are the wisdom of those who have lived their lives in a joyous state, in state of permanent happiness without the slightest trace of sorrow. When a proper guidance is available, one has to take advantage of the same instead of trying to find one's own track, more so when he himself is caught in an illusive way of life.

Rewards & Punishments

Understandably we are so used to look to rewards and are very much afraid of the results. It is for this reason that we find even the Government has got a system of recognizing the services of those who have rendered distinguished service to the country in different fields. The rewards and punishments in God's scheme are well settled. The consequence of an action is bound to fructify at a time, which is most appropriate in the divine scheme. For instance, if one has committed an offence under the Indian Penal Court, he can escape to a French territory and thereby punishment under the Indian Penal Code, but the God's laws are such that the punishments will come to a person wherever one is and however, much he may hide to escape it. This applies to the rewards equally. The law of God is always just and fair.

Karma Marga

In life, action is unavoidable. The only question therefore is what should be one's attitude to work, which would help to achieve the human purpose? What would further the mental purity, which would help towards attainment of that purpose? The importance of this question arises from the

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fact that due to the desire oriented actions of this life and past lives before a particular human birth, there is an automatic direction to action based on tendencies, which are essentially geared, to look for happiness in objects. Therefore this tendency never dries up. There would be no end unless one consciously tries to extricate himself from this situation by well directed effort. What is well directed effort and what is not? It should be obvious that the way we are now performing action can lead only to further action and not to the ending of it. Hence the need for an alternative approach. One might say, action should be done in such a way as to please Iswara. Our Acharya has compassionately pointed out that one can please Iswara only by giving our mind to him. Giving one's mind in practical terms means acting without superimposing the individual desire and regarding every action as an offering to Iswara. It also implies awareness of the truth that the results of all action, will be in accordance with the laws of God, his ordinance.

Such action would certainly lead to the purity of mind, which is needed for following the scriptures and the guru's guidance on them.

His Holiness also cautions that when performing action with this right attitude, one should not tire and question, "How long would karma last? When would I be free from it"? and so on. "Suppose one is pounding paddy to

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separate rice from husk, would it not be futile for him to escape how many poundings are needed? It will be needed as long as the separation of chaff from the grain is not completed."

Effort is needed now

Sanat Sujatha says that 'slipping out of Self-awareness alone is death'. Effort is therefore needed now to become Self-aware, since it alone enables one to abide in the state of natural happiness. Four types of spiritual practice are needed to develop interest in and to be sustained in the pursuit of truth. The first is the discrimination between real and unreal. By this means, one becomes aware that Self alone is real and all the rest is transient. The next aspect is to lose interest in all transient things. The other is the eightfold path including detachment for the tranquility of the mind. It is difficult to overstress the importance of single minded search for truth, termed as mumukshutva.

Jnana Marga

The alternative types of performing action recommended by scriptures will only help to purify the mind and to its tendencies to look outside of itself for its happiness. However, Acharya Sankara is categoric that Jnana alone can destroy the roots of karma and free a person from bondage to action, which has an inherent momentum to perpetuate itself.

Who am 'I'?

The root of the problem is the mistaking of the body to be the Self Deha Atma Buddhi. Such mistaking is referred to by the example of a rope being taken for a snake in twilight. "It may create a little sense of fear but will not cause any serious harm. On the other hand, if the reverse of mistaking, a snake is taken to be a rope, it could be quite disastrous. If one holds a snake thinking it is a rope, he would be bitten by it and the resulting poisoning may cause death. If only one beats the rope, thinking it to be a snake, it will not end

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the illusion. Only when recognition that what is seen is a rope, the false knowledge ends. This is an illusion which needs to be tackled by enquiry. It has the beginning and end in time. Therefore it cannot be the Self, which is ever existent.

Body is not the Self. This body is made up of five dissoluble elements and subject to change every second. Again when sleep overtakes, why does the body wish to lie flat on the bed or on the floor? All these would help to conclude that body is not the Self. "One might also mention the fact that the body, which after death needs four persons to carry it to the cremation ground is effortlessly carried by a person during his life time because of the ever present light of the Self."

Then the question would arise, is the vital force in the body the Self? When breath stops, one is declared dead. "Even so the question would remain if the vital force, which seems so important can be regarded as Self. The answer is 'no'. For there is a power which controls breath. Only the link of the vital force of Self makes it possible."

"By the same logic, mind is also not the Self. Sometimes when we are speaking with another person, he might say he was inattentive and request for the repetition of the same. There must be an entity which says that the mind has strayed... The perceiver therefore is different from perception. Since the perceiver merges with perception the mind too may not be regarded as Self".

Thus it will be evident that the identification with the body, the senses, the breath and the mind with the Self is the root cause of one's sorrow. Because of that, one acts in the illusive belief of identifying the means of happiness outside of himself instead of turning within and abiding in the Self.

The importance of guru's guidance and grace/Devotees responsibility

Spiritual practice can fructify only by the grace of guru. His Holiness repeatedly stresses this by his references to the life of Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada. The guru alone can ensure the readiness of the disciple to shy

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away from the past allurements of the mind and to keep his faith on a steady unwavering course, and to grow in mental comprehension of the awareness of the ever existing 'I' minus the illusive 'Upadhis (add on's). Even so this does not absolve the practitioner from his duty to be steadfast in practice.

His Holiness referred to the cases of the four disciples of Sri Sankaracharya. Sureshvaracharya was fully ripe by proper performance of the prescribed karmas. Therefore he was able to accept the superior logic and authority of Sri Sankara and became his disciple. Hastamalaka was ready for Self-awareness in his previous life. He required Sri Sankara as guru to ignite it. Though in some accounts, Totakacharya is said to have no knowledge of the scriptures, this is not correct since he too was ready. The case of Padmapada, ofcourse is an outstanding example of what faith in guru can do?

A conversation with a devotee serves to bring the need for the disciple to be steadfast in following the guru's guidance.

Devotee: Is anything impossible by guru's grace?

Jagadguru: If one wants to satisfy his hunger he must eat himself. To be cured of illness the patient alone has to take medicines. Similarly, the guru will direct and guide the disciple about the necessary practices for attaining Self-knowledge. If a doctor administers the medicine to himself will the patient be cured? Similarly, the disciples' ignorance cannot be vicariously ended by the guru's sadhanas. Hence, the timeless ignorance cannot be removed unless the disciple himself practices what he has been instructed to do. There are verses in the 'Viveka Choodamani' which explain clearly that Self-knowledge is not a commodity which can be purchased in the market nor is it available in heavens or even in

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Brahmaloka. Only a guru can show you the way. He can only indicate the way. According to Advaita one can attain liberation only by his own efforts. The worship of Iswara is to protect ourselves against obstructions in the way of sadhana. Full liberty is there for every human being for practicing the way to Self-knowledge. What is sought is the grace of God to remove problems and difficulties which arise on the way.

Devotee: It is said that Totakacharya attained Self-knowledge by the blessing of his guru Adi Sankaracharya. Likewise can we not also be liberated by the blessing of the Jagadguru?

Jagadguru: Totakacharya attained Self-knowledge and erudition in the scriptures not only by the grace of the Acharya. He had worshipped Iswara, enquired into the scriptures in his previous lives. It bore fruit fully, though apparently suddenly by the grace of Acharya. If you have also such samskaras let it bear fruit.

Another devotee also raised a similar question.

Devotee: According to Sankara Vijayam, Totakacharya was ignorant and it was only the grace of Acharya that was responsible for liberation.

Jagadguru: If that be the case, everyone can be lazy, do only service to the guru and attain liberation. Is it the purpose of the scriptures to encourage laziness? The prescribed methods of listening to the truth, reflecting on it and practising it would be side-stepped and rendered meaningless.

Devotee: We now realise that along with service to the guru other spiritual practices are also required. Even so, if one easy method is prescribed by the guru, cannot that serve to supplement service to the guru? If so, you may kindly initiate us into a mantra which would be powerful enough.

Jagadguru: Listen to this story because your arguments seem to

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be like that. A thief, entered a city, burgled some places and started returning to his own house. However, due to excessive police vigilance, he had to wander through different bylanes to escape them. In this process he missed his way. Ultimately, he reached the police station on the outskirts of the city. By then it was dawn. Hence, he fell into the hands of the very police force he had been avoiding throughout the night.

Devotee: We are unable to link this story with our question.

Jagadguru: You began by asserting that guru's grace alone is sufficient and that no spiritual practices are required. In order to remove this basic error, I have explained several things to you. Even so you are persisting with your doubts. You have started asking the very same questions.

Devotee: Earlier we were asking about Guru's grace. Now we are requesting the guru to initiate us into a mantra. We are not in the same predicament as the thief who got caught by reaching a wrong place after much effort. Having come here we hope to be initiated into one potent mantra at least and get peace of mind.

Jagadguru: The guru alone can prescribe the method suited for each disciple. The disciple should not decide in advance what is needed.

Devotee: Yes. We hope that Sannidhanam will initiate us into Sri Vidya mantra at least next time.

Jagadguru: Don't take a promise from me. Since you are a judge, I have to be careful about my utterances. I can only say that a good mantra will be given. I am unable to assure that it will be Sri Vidya.

Devotee: Can you not bless us by fulfilling our wishes?

Jagadguru: I am certainly willing to grant your request, but it may not be in the particular way you want. A patient can only explain his symptoms and problems but cannot ask the doctor to prescribe a particular

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medicine for it. Similarly a disciple can only explain to the Guru the state of his mind and seek relief. He cannot determine the appropriate sadhana also and insist on being guided on those lines. You will certainly get a proper mantra when you come next.

Devotee: However, we feel that it will serve the purpose of quietening the mind.

Jagadguru: If that be so, it can be given on an appropriate occasion. But it will not help to liberate you as you had desired. As Bhagavatpada has said, one cannot be cured of his ailment merely by pronouncing the names of the medicines which are its antidote. Similarly, without the prescribed sravana, manana and nididhyasana, one cannot become aware of the truth.

Devotee: Is there no exception? Suppose one is initiated into a very sacred mantra like Sri Vidya, will it not be sufficient?

Jagadguru: Why do you talk about Sri Vidya? You have already been initiated into the sacred Gayatri mantra. Have you not heard that the Smriti rates Gayatri as the most sacred mantra?

Devotee: We are now repeating Gayatri. But we feel that the sacred Sri Vidya will help us to be liberated.

Jagadguru: Please refer to sloka 67 of Viveka Choodamani in which the correct position has been explained by Bhagavatpada. Do you know the meaning of that verse?

The best way to conclude this offering is to remember the verses of the great devotee Sri Krishnaswami Iyer, later Swami Jnanananda.

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Jayatu jayatu nityam sarada-abheeshtha-datree
jayatu jayatu nityam chandramoulir-mahesah
jayatu jayatu nityam sankaro desikendrah
jayatu jayatu nityam chandrachudo gurur nah

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Self-knowledge

The Human purpose

It is only after many births in various wombs that one is ultimately able to attain human birth. The question therefore arises as to what we are achieving by being born as human being? We are witnessing at present times, what could be termed a life in which money is the fulfillment. Who can be a bigger fool than the one who has squandered the advantage of being born as a human being? Even if we lose a couple of rupees, we are downcast for three days. Would not drifting of life away be a tragedy of highest order? Effort is therefore needed now to become Self-aware, since it alone enables one to abide in the state of natural happiness.

- Sacred Words,
H.H.Chandrashekara Bharati Mahaswamin

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